

Listing of claims:

1 1-34. (Cancelled)

1 35. (Previously Presented) A method for configuring a product that is associated with a
2 number of configurable features, wherein the method allows a customer to
3 dynamically interact with a seller of the product over the Internet during the
4 configuration, the method comprising:
5 receiving into a configuration application of the seller a selected feature;
6 communicating from the seller to a manufacturer the selected feature;
7 receiving from the manufacturer over the Internet an automated response to the
8 communicated selected feature, the automated response including an
9 availability date that corresponds to the selected feature; and
10 updating an in-process bill of materials to reflect the selected feature and the
11 availability date;
12 wherein the availability date received from the manufacturer over the Internet is
13 provided to or by a supply chain planning (SCP) system.

1 36-38. (Cancelled)

1 39. (Previously Presented) A method for selling a configurable product incorporating at
2 least one feature to be selected by a customer, the method comprising:
3 (a) receiving a feature selection at a seller;
4 (b) updating an inventory library based upon the received selection to reflect
5 constraints imposed by the received feature selection, the constraints

relating to a technical feature limitation, a price limitation or availability
of the configurable product;

(c) providing the received selection to a supplier;

(d) receiving information from the supplier comprising at least one of availability
date and price for the received selection;

(e) where customer desires are not satisfied, providing at least one of a customer
desired availability date and a customer desired price for the selection;

(f) providing accommodation data from the supplier, the accommodation data
responsive to the at least one of the customer desired availability date and
the customer desired price for the selection; and

(g) updating at least one of a manufacturing bill of materials, a pricing bill of
materials, and a configuration bill of materials based on the received
selection;

wherein the customer desires comprise either at least one of a plurality of
availability dates or at least one of a plurality of prices, for the selected
feature.

40. (Previously Presented) A method for selling a configurable product incorporating at

least one feature to be selected by a customer, the method comprising:

(a) receiving a feature selection at a seller, the seller being a seller of the
configurable product to the customer;

(b) updating an inventory library based upon the received selection to reflect
constraints imposed by the selection and relating to compatibility among
features of the configurable product;

8 (c) providing the received selection to a supplier of inventory to the seller;
9 (d) receiving information from the supplier, the information comprising a
10 plurality of availability dates and a plurality of prices for the received
11 selection;
12 (e) where customer desires are not satisfied, providing at least one of a customer
13 desired availability date and a customer desired price for the received
14 selection;
15 (f) providing to the customer accommodation data from the supplier, the
16 accommodation data responsive to the at least one of the customer desired
17 availability date and the customer desired price for the selection; and
18 (g) updating at least one of a manufacturing bill of materials, a pricing bill of
19 materials, and a configuration bill of materials based on the received
20 selection.

1 41-49. (Cancelled)

2 50. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 35, further comprising: repeating the
3 steps of receiving into a configuration application a selected feature,
4 communicating to a manufacturer the selected feature, receiving from the
5 manufacturer an automated response including an availability date, and updating a
6 number of times until the configuration is complete thereby yielding a completed
7 bill of materials.

1 51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the step of receiving from
2 the manufacturer an automated response including an availability date is preceded
3 by the step of communicating the selected feature to a vendor.

1 52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, the method further comprising: in
2 response to the received availability date being unsatisfactory to the customer,
3 communicating a customer specified availability date to at least one of the seller
4 and manufacturer.

1 53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the availability date received
2 from the manufacturer is in response to a customer specified availability date
3 communicated to at least one of the seller and manufacturer.

1 54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the availability date received
2 from the manufacturer is in response to a customer specified price communicated
3 to at least one of the seller and manufacturer.

1 55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, further comprising: deriving, from
2 the in-process bill of materials, an in-process manufacturing bill of materials that
3 reflects the received availability date that corresponds to the selected feature.

1 56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, the method further comprising:
2 receiving a price that corresponds to the selected feature.

1 57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, the method further comprising: in
2 response to the received price being unsatisfactory to the customer,
3 communicating a customer specified price to at least one of the seller and
4 manufacturer.

1 58. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, wherein the price received is in
2 response to a customer specified availability date communicated to at least one of
3 the seller and manufacturer.

1 59. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, wherein the price received is in
2 response to a customer specified price communicated to at least one of the seller
3 and manufacturer.

1 60. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein a relationship between the
2 customer and the seller has a configuration side associated with the customer, and
3 a resource planning side associated with the seller, and the customer-seller
4 relationship is respectively one of a consumer-seller relationship, a seller-supplier
5 relationship and a supplier-vendor relationship.

1 61. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60, further comprising:
2 in response to the price of the selected feature being determined on the
3 configuration side, deriving an in-process pricing bill of materials from the
4 in-process bill of materials, wherein the in-process pricing bill of materials
5 reflects the price of the selected feature; and

6 in response to the price of the selected feature being determined on the resource
7 planning side, deriving the in-process pricing bill of materials from an in-
8 process manufacturing bill of materials that is derived from the in-process
9 bill of materials and reflects the received availability date of the selected
10 feature.

1 62. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the pricing bill of materials
2 is derived from the configuration bill of materials.

1 63. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the pricing bill of materials
2 is derived from the manufacturing bill of materials.

1 64. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the step (g) of updating at
2 least one of a manufacturing bill of materials, a pricing bill of materials, and a
3 configuration bill of materials is based upon the accommodation data from the
4 supplier.

1 65. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, wherein the pricing bill of materials
2 is derived from the configuration bill of materials.

1 66. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, wherein the pricing bill of materials
2 is derived from the manufacturing bill of materials.

1 67. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, wherein the step (g) of updating at
2 least one of a manufacturing bill of materials, a pricing bill of materials, and a

3 configuration bill of materials is based upon the accommodation data from the
4 supplier.

1 68. (Previously Presented) A method for configuring a product having at least one
2 selectable feature, the method comprising:
3 receiving, from a customer, a selection of a feature of the product at a
4 configuration application of a seller of the product, the seller being a seller
5 of the product to the customer;
6 communicating the received selection from the configuration application to a
7 supplier system of a supplier to the seller;
8 receiving from the supplier system an automated response to the communicated
9 received selection, the automated response including an availability date
10 of the selected feature;
11 updating an in-process bill of materials based upon the availability date of the
12 selected feature; and
13 using the updated in-process bill of materials to determine a first availability date
14 of the product, the first availability date of the product being based on at
15 least the availability date of the selected feature; and
16 providing the first availability date of the product to the customer.

1 69. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 68, wherein the automated response is
2 generated by a manufacturer of the selected feature.

1 70. (Currently Amended) A method for configuring a product having at least one
2 selectable feature, the method comprising:
3 receiving, from a customer, a selection of a feature of the product at a
4 configuration application of a seller of the product;
5 communicating the received selection from the configuration application to a
6 supplier system of a supplier to the seller;
7 receiving from the supplier system an automated response to the communicated
8 received selection, the automated response including an availability date
9 of the selected feature;
10 updating an in-process bill of materials based upon the availability date of the
11 selected feature; and
12 using the updated in-process bill of materials to determine a first availability date
13 of the product, the first availability date of the product being based on at
14 least the availability date of the selected feature; and
15 providing the first availability date of the product to the customer,
16 wherein the automated response includes a plurality of availability dates, each of
17 the plurality of availability dates associated with a different price of the
18 selected feature.

1 71. (Currently Amended) A method for configuring a product having at least one
2 selectable feature, the method comprising:
3 receiving, from a customer, a selection of a feature of the product at a
4 configuration application of a seller of the product;

5 communicating the received selection from the configuration application to a
6 supplier system;
7 receiving from the supplier system an automated response to the communicated
8 received selection, the automated response including an availability date
9 of the selected feature;
10 updating an in-process bill of materials based upon the availability date of the
11 selected feature; and
12 using the updated in-process bill of materials to determine a first availability date
13 of the product, the first availability date of the product being based on at
14 least the availability date of the selected feature;
15 providing the first availability date of the product to the customer;
16 ~~providing to the customer a determined second availability date of the product;~~
17 ~~providing to the customer a first product price associated with the first availability~~
18 ~~date of the product;~~
19 providing to the customer a second product price associated with the second
20 availability date of the product;
21 providing to the customer a determined second availability date of the product;
22 providing to the customer a first product price associated with the first availability
23 date of the product; and
24 providing to the customer a second product price associated with the second
25 availability date of the product;

26 wherein the automated response further includes a plurality of availability dates
27 associated with the selected feature, each of the plurality of availability
28 dates associated with a different price of the selected feature.

1 72. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 68, wherein the first availability date of
2 the product, determined using the updated in-process bill of materials, is further
3 based on an availability date of another selectable feature.

1 73. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 68, further including receiving, at the
2 configuration application, a feature price that corresponds to the selected feature.

1 74. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 73, further including updating a product
2 price responsive to the received feature price, and providing the updated product
3 price to the customer.

1 75. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 73, wherein the received feature price is
2 responsive to a customer specified availability date communicated to the seller
3 and to the manufacturer.

1 76. (Previously Presented) A method for configuring a product using a computer
2 network, the method comprising:
3 receiving at a configuration engine a set of constraints defining a first set of valid
4 configurations of a product, the product having at least a first selectable
5 feature and a second selectable feature, the set of constraints being
6 determined by a seller or a manufacturer;

7 receiving at the configuration engine a customer specified constraint, the
8 customer specified constraint being received from a customer and being
9 received using the computer network;
10 receiving at the configuration engine a selection of the first selectable feature, the
11 received selection being received from the customer and being received
12 using the computer network;
13 determining a second set of valid configurations of the product, the second set of
14 valid configurations being a subset of the first set of valid configurations
15 and being constrained by the customer specified constraint and the
16 received selection;
17 determining at least two possible configurations of the second selectable feature
18 that satisfy the second set of valid configurations of the product; and
19 providing to the customer the determined at least two configurations of the second
20 selectable feature, using the computer network.

1 77. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 76, wherein the customer specified
2 constraint includes an availability date of the product.

1 78. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 76, wherein the customer specified
2 constraint includes a price of the product or a feature price.

1 79. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 76, further including determining a
2 feature price using the received selection and using the feature price to update a
3 product price.

1 80. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 76, further including determining a
2 feature availability date using the received selection, and using the feature
3 availability date to determine a product availability date.

1 81. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 76, wherein determining at least two
2 configurations of the second selectable feature that satisfy the second set of valid
3 configurations includes identifying a third configuration of the second selectable
4 feature that would be an invalid configuration due to the customer specified
5 constraint.

1 82. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 76, further including receiving at the
2 configuration engine a feature availability date from a supply system of a
3 manufacturer.

1 83. (Previously Presented) A method for configuring a product having at least one
2 configurable feature, the method comprising:
3 receiving, from a customer, a selection of a feature of the product, at a
4 configuration application of a seller of the product, the seller being a seller
5 of the product to the customer;
6 communicating the received selection from the configuration application of the
7 seller to a supplier system of a manufacturer, the manufacturer configured
8 to supply the feature to the seller;

9 receiving from the manufacturer an automated response to the communicated
10 received selection, the automated response including an availability date
11 of the selected feature or a price of the selected feature;
12 updating an in-process bill of materials using the automated response;
13 using the updated in-process bill of materials to determine an availability date of
14 the product and a price of the product based on the received selection; and
15 providing, to the customer, the determined first availability date of the product
16 and the determined price of the product.

1 84. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 83, wherein communicating the received
2 selection from the configuration system to the supplier system includes
3 communicating using the Internet.

1 85. (Previously Presented) A method for configuring a product that is associated with a
2 number of configurable features, wherein the method allows a customer to
3 dynamically interact with a seller of the product over the Internet during the
4 configuration, the method comprising:
5 receiving into a configuration application of the seller a selected feature, from the
6 customer;
7 communicating from the seller to a manufacturer the selected feature;
8 receiving from the manufacturer an automated response including an availability
9 date that corresponds to the selected feature; and
10 updating an in-process bill of materials to reflect that selected feature.

1 86. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, further comprising:

2 repeating the steps of receiving into a configuration application a selected feature,
3 communicating to a manufacturer the selected feature, receiving from the
4 manufacturer an automated response including an availability date, and
5 updating a number of times until the configuration is complete thereby
6 yielding a completed bill of materials.

1 87. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, wherein the step of receiving from
2 the manufacturer an automated response including an availability date is preceded
3 by the step of:
4 communicating the selected feature to a vendor.

1 88. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, the method further comprising:
2 in response to the received availability date being unsatisfactory to the customer,
3 communicating a customer specified availability date to at least one of the
4 seller and manufacturer.

1 89. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, wherein the availability date received
2 from the manufacturer is in response to a customer specified availability date
3 communicated to at least one of the seller and manufacturer.

1 90. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, wherein the availability date received
2 from the manufacturer is in response to a customer specified price communicated
3 to at least one of the seller and manufacturer.

1 91. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, further comprising:

2 deriving, from the in-process bill of materials, an in-process manufacturing bill of
3 materials that reflects the received availability date that corresponds to the
4 selected feature.

1 92. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, the method further comprising:
2 receiving a price that corresponds to the selected feature.

1 93. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 92, the method further comprising:
2 in response to the received price being unsatisfactory to the customer,
3 communicating a customer specified price to at least one of the seller and
4 manufacturer.

1 94. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 92, wherein the price received is in
2 response to a customer specified availability date communicated to at least one of
3 the seller and manufacturer.

1 95. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 92, wherein the price received is in
2 response to a customer specified price communicated to at least one of the seller
3 and manufacturer.

1 96. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 92, wherein a relationship between the
2 customer and the seller has a configuration side associated with the customer, and
3 a resource planning side associated with the seller, and the customer-seller
4 relationship is a consumer-seller relationship.

1 97. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 96, further comprising:

2 in response to the price of the selected feature being determined on the
3 configuration side, deriving an in-process pricing bill of materials from the
4 in-process bill of materials, wherein the in-process pricing bill of materials
5 reflects the price of the selected feature; and
6 in response to the price of the selected feature being determined on the resource
7 planning side, deriving the in-process pricing bill of materials from an in-
8 process manufacturing bill of materials that is derived from the in-process
9 bill of materials and reflects the received availability date of the selected
10 feature.

1 98. (Previously Presented) A system for configuring a product that is associated with a
2 number of configurable features, wherein the system allows a customer to interact
3 with a supplier of one or more of the configurable features over the Internet
4 during the configuration, the system comprising:
5 a configuration application of a seller configured for receiving a selection of a
6 feature of the product from a customer, and for validating a number of
7 constraints associated with the selected feature, the constraints relating to
8 compatibility between the selected feature and other features of the
9 product or availability of the product including the selected feature, the
10 seller being a seller of the product to the customer;
11 a communication module coupled to the configuration application for
12 communicating the selected feature from the seller to a supplier, and for
13 receiving over the Internet an availability date of the selected feature from

14 the supplier to the configuration application, the supplier being a supplier
15 of the selected feature to the seller; and
16 a first storage area coupled to one of the configuration application and the
17 communication module for storing an in-process bill of materials that
18 reflects the selected feature.

1 99. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, wherein after the customer has
2 completed configuring the product, the in-process bill of materials represents a
3 completed bill of materials.

1 100. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, wherein in response to the
2 availability date being unsatisfactory to the customer, the communication module
3 communicates a customer specified availability date to the supplier.

1 101. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, wherein the availability date is in
2 response to a customer specified availability date communicated to the supplier
3 by the communication module.

1 102. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, wherein the availability date is in
2 response to a customer specified price communicated to the supplier by the
3 communication module.

1 103. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, wherein an in-process
2 manufacturing bill of materials is derived from the in-process bill of materials,
3 and reflects the availability date of the selected feature.

1 104. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, further comprising:
2 a second storage area coupled to one of the configuration application and the
3 communication module for storing an in-process manufacturing bill of
4 materials that reflects the availability date of the selected feature; and
5 a third storage area coupled to one of the configuration application and the
6 communication module for storing an in-process pricing bill of materials
7 that reflects a price of the selected feature.

1 105. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, wherein the communication module
2 is also for communicating a price of the selected feature from the supplier to the
3 configuration application.

1 106. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 105, wherein the communication
2 module comprises:
3 an availability date communication module for communicating the availability
4 date of the selected feature from the supplier to the configuration
5 application; and
6 a price communication module for communicating the price of the selected
7 feature to the configuration application.

1 107. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, wherein a relationship between the
2 customer and the seller has a configuration side associated with the customer, and
3 a resource planning side associated with the seller, and the customer-seller

4 relationship is respectively one of a consumer-seller relationship, a seller-
5 manufacturer relationship and a manufacturer-vendor relationship.

1 108. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 107, wherein:

2 in response to the price of the selected feature being determined on the
3 configuration side, an in-process pricing bill of materials is derived from
4 the in-process bill of materials, wherein the in-process pricing bill of
5 materials reflects the price of the selected feature; and
6 in response to the price of the selected feature being determined on the resource
7 planning side, the in-process pricing bill of materials is derived from an
8 in-process manufacturing bill of materials that is derived from the in-
9 process bill of materials and reflects the received availability date of the
10 selected feature.

1 109. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, further comprising:

2 a user interface coupled to the configuration application for allowing the customer
3 to interact with the system..

1 110. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98, further comprising:

2 an inventory library coupled to the configuration application for providing the
3 customer a number of the configurable features that can be selected to
4 configure the product.

1 111-113. (Cancelled)

1 114. (Previously Presented) A process for configuring a product that is associated with a
2 number of configurable features, wherein the customer dynamically interacts with
3 a seller of the product over the Internet in order to define a set of sales parameters
4 that includes an availability date of at least one of the configurable features, the
5 method comprising:
6 responsive to the customer selecting a feature of the product, receiving at the
7 seller an automated response from a manufacturer, the automated response
8 including an availability date that corresponds to that selected feature;
9 responsive to the received availability date being unsatisfactory to the customer,
10 communicating a customer specified availability date to the manufacturer;
11 updating an in-process bill of materials to reflect that selected feature; and
12 in response to the customer being satisfied with the sales parameters, submitting a
13 completed bill of materials to the manufacturer.

1 115. (Previously Presented) A computer program product, stored on a computer readable
2 medium, for configuring a product that is associated with a number of
3 configurable features, wherein in response to the computer program product being
4 executed by a processor, the processor performs the steps of:
5 receiving from a supplier over the Internet an availability date that corresponds to
6 a product feature selected by a customer, the supplier being a supplier to a
7 seller, the customer being a customer of the seller;

8 in response to the availability date being unsatisfactory to the customer,
9 communicating over the Internet a customer specified availability date to
10 the supplier; and
11 receiving from the supplier over the Internet an automated response including an
12 accommodation based on the customer specified availability date.

1 116. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 115, further
2 comprising:
3 updating a bill of materials to reflect the accommodation received from the
4 supplier.

1 117. (Previously Presented) A computer program product, stored on a computer readable
2 medium, for configuring a product that is associated with a number of
3 configurable features, wherein in response to the computer program product being
4 executed by a processor, the processor performs the steps of:
5 responsive to a customer selecting a feature of the product, receiving over the
6 Internet at a seller an automated response including an availability date
7 that corresponds to the selected feature, the automated response being
8 from a manufacturer of the selected feature;
9 responsive to the received availability date being unsatisfactory to the customer,
10 communicating a customer specified availability date to the manufacturer;
11 updating an in-process bill of materials to reflect the selected feature; and

12 in response to the customer being satisfied with a set of sales parameters
13 including the availability date of the selected feature, submitting a
14 completed bill of materials to the manufacturer over the Internet.

1 118. (Previously Presented) A system for configuring a product that is associated with a
2 number of configurable features, wherein the system allows a customer to interact
3 with a supplier of the product over the Internet during the configuration, the
4 system comprising:
5 configuration application means for receiving at a seller of the product a selection
6 by the customer of a product feature, the product feature being one of the
7 number of configurable features, and for validating a number of
8 constraints associated with the selected product feature;
9 communication module means coupled to the configuration application means for
10 communicating from the seller to the supplier the selected product feature,
11 and for communicating over the Internet an availability date of the
12 selected product feature from the supplier to the configuration application
13 means, the supplier being a supplier of the selected product feature to the
14 seller; and
15 storage area means coupled to at least one of the configuration application means
16 and the communication module means for storing an in-process bill of
17 materials that reflects the product feature selected by the user.

1 119. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, wherein the availability date
2 received from the manufacturer over the Internet is provided by an enterprise
3 resource planning (ERP) system.

1 120. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 114, wherein the step of
2 communicating a customer specified availability date to the manufacturer is
3 followed by receiving from the manufacturer an automated response including an
4 accommodation in response to the customer specified availability date.

1 121. (Previously Presented) A method for selling a configurable product incorporating at
2 least one feature to be selected by a customer, the method comprising:
3 (a) receiving at a seller a feature selection by the customer;
4 (b) updating an inventory library based upon the received selection to reflect
5 constraints imposed by the received selection;
6 (c) providing the received selection to a supplier, the supplier being a supplier of
7 the feature to the seller;
8 (d) receiving information from the supplier comprising at least one of availability
9 date and price for the received selection;
10 (e) where customer desires are not satisfied, providing at least one of a customer
11 desired availability date and a customer desired price for the received
12 selection;
13 (f) displaying accommodation data from the supplier corresponding to the
14 customer desires; and

15 (g) updating at least one of a manufacturing bill of materials, a pricing bill of
16 materials, and a configuration bill of materials based on the selection.

1 122. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 121, wherein the pricing bill of
2 materials is derived from the configuration bill of materials.

1 123. (Currently Amended) A method for selling a configurable product incorporating at
2 least one feature to be selected by a customer, the method comprising:
3 receiving at a seller a feature selection by the customer;
4 updating an inventory library based upon the received selection to reflect
5 constraints imposed by the received selection;
6 providing the received selection to a supplier, the supplier being a supplier of the
7 feature to the seller;
8 receiving information from the supplier comprising at least one of availability
9 date and price for the received selection;
10 where customer desires are not satisfied, providing at least one of a customer
11 desired availability date and a customer desired price for the received
12 selection;
13 displaying accommodation data from the supplier corresponding to the customer
14 desires; and
15 updating at least one of a manufacturing bill of materials, a pricing bill of
16 materials, and a configuration bill of materials based on the selection. The
17 ~~method of claim 121,~~ wherein the pricing bill of materials is derived from
18 the manufacturing bill of materials.

1 124. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 121, wherein the step (g) of updating at
2 least one of a manufacturing bill of materials, a pricing bill of materials, and a
3 configuration bill of materials is based upon the accommodation data from the
4 supplier.

1 125. (Previously Presented) A system for selling a configurable product incorporating at
2 least one feature to be selected by a customer from a catalog of selectable
3 features, the system comprising:
4 an inventory library coupled to a configuration engine of a seller of the
5 configurable product, the inventory library configured for providing the
6 catalog of selectable features , the catalog of selectable features
7 corresponding to a particular configurable product;
8 a user interface coupled to the configuration engine using the Internet, the user
9 interface for displaying the catalog of selectable features and for receiving
10 customer desires; and
11 a supplier system coupled to the configuration engine using the Internet, the
12 supplier system being associated with a supplier of the at least one feature
13 to the seller of the configurable product and being configured for
14 providing at least one of availability information and price information to
15 at least one of the user interface, the configuration engine, and the
16 inventory library, and for providing accommodation data to the
17 configuration engine in automated response to customer desires
18 communicated to the supplier system, the configuration engine for

19 validating the customer desires against constraints associated with the
20 selectable features, for determining whether the at least one of availability
21 information and price information meet customer desires, and for
22 communicating specific customer desires to the supplier system.

1 126. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 125, wherein the user interface,
2 configuration engine, and supplier system are remotely located with respect to
3 each other.

1 127. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 125, wherein the configuration engine
2 further comprises:
3 a configuration application,
4 a price communication module,
5 an availability communication module, and
6 means for creating and updating at least one of a configuration bill of materials, a
7 manufacturing bill of materials, and a pricing bill of materials.

1 128. (Previously Presented) A method of selling from a supplier a product, the product
2 including at least one selectable feature to be chosen by a customer, the method
3 comprising:
4 providing to a customer a selectable feature, and at least one of price and
5 availability date of the selectable feature;
6 conveying to the supplier at least one of a customer desired availability date and a
7 customer desired price; and

8 supplying an automated response to a seller, the automated response including an
9 accommodation from the supplier based on the at least one of a customer
10 desired availability date and a customer desired price.

1 129. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 128, wherein the customer is chosen
2 from a set consisting of a retailer, wholesaler, manufacturer and distributor, of the
3 product.

1 130. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 128, wherein the supplier is chosen
2 from a set consisting of a wholesaler, manufacturer, distributor and vendor, of the
3 product.